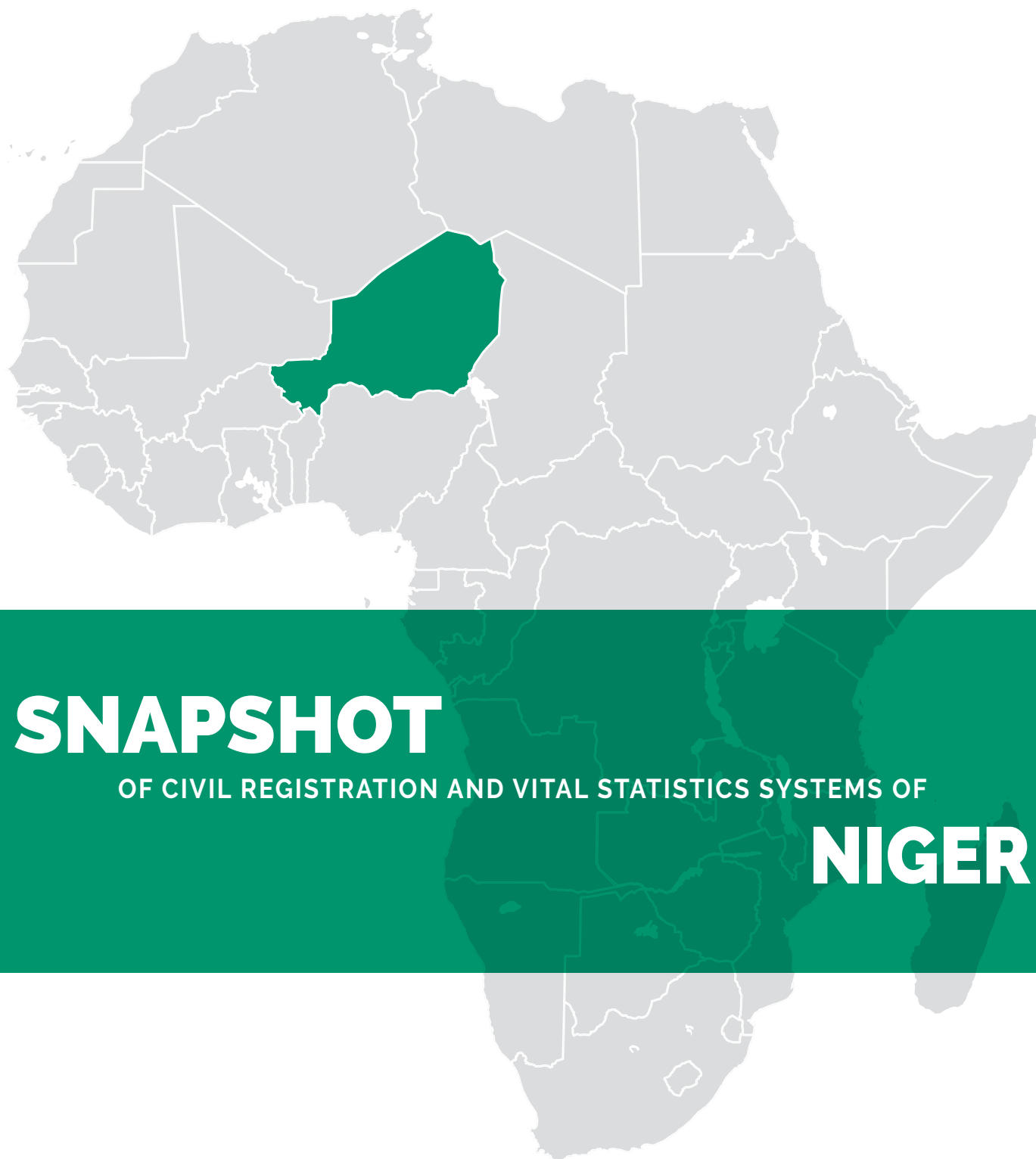




**CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE**  
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# SNAPSHOT

OF CIVIL REGISTRATION AND VITAL STATISTICS SYSTEMS OF

# NIGER



**ECA**

## Program information

### About the Centre of Excellence for CRVS Systems

Housed at the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), the Centre of Excellence for Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) Systems is a global knowledge and resource hub that actively supports national efforts to develop, strengthen, and scale-up CRVS systems. It collaborates with organizations and experts to broker access to information and expertise, including global standards, tools, research evidence, and relevant good practice.

The Centre of Excellence was established with funding from Global Affairs Canada and IDRC and contributes directly to the work of the Global Financing Facility, a key financing platform of the UN Secretary General's Global Strategy for Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health.

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# Contents

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Program information .....                          | ii |
| Introduction .....                                 | 2  |
| Brief country profile .....                        | 2  |
| CRVS dimensions .....                              | 3  |
| Civil registration system .....                    | 4  |
| Legislative framework .....                        | 4  |
| Management, organization, and operations .....     | 4  |
| Vital statistics system .....                      | 5  |
| Vital statistics .....                             | 5  |
| Causes of death .....                              | 6  |
| Digitization .....                                 | 6  |
| Computerization .....                              | 6  |
| Interface with other sectors and operations .....  | 6  |
| Improvement initiatives and external support ..... | 6  |
| Improvement plan and budget .....                  | 6  |
| Support from development partners .....            | 7  |
| Conclusion .....                                   | 7  |
| Resources .....                                    | 8  |
| Websites .....                                     | 8  |
| Additional materials .....                         | 8  |
| Endnotes .....                                     | 9  |

## Introduction

The purpose of this report is to provide a brief introduction to the civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS) system in Niger.

The information is based on a questionnaire completed by the Niger Civil Registry along with a desk review of publicly available documents on CRVS in Niger. Among other things, this report presents:

- Background information on the country;
- Selected indicators relevant to CRVS processes;
- Stakeholders' activities; and
- Resources available and needed to strengthen CRVS systems.



*Disclaimer: The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.*

## Brief country profile

Niger is a landlocked country in West Africa that is named after the Niger River. It is bordered by Libya to the northeast, Chad to the east, Nigeria to the south, Benin to the southwest, Mali and Burkina Faso to the west, and Algeria to the northwest. Six of these countries are facing a crisis of one kind or another. This has led to an influx of refugees, and some of the conflicts have spilled over into Niger.

- Land area: 1,270,000 km<sup>2</sup> (over 80 percent of the country is in the Sahara Desert)
- Population: 24.2 million<sup>1</sup>
- Capital city: Niamey
- Official working language: French
- Ministry responsible for civil registration: Ministry of the Interior (Ministère de l'intérieur) through its Directorate of Civil Status, Migration and Refugees (Direction Générale de l'État Civil, des Migrations et des Réfugiés)
- Ministries that may issue notifications for vital events prior to registration: Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Public Health, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Ministry of National Defense
- National statistical office: National Statistical Institute of Niger (Institut National de la Statistique du Niger)

## CRVS dimensions

| Births   |                            |
|--|----------------------------|
| Completeness of birth registration                                     | 66.5% (2019) <sup>2</sup>  |
| Children under 5 years of age whose births were reported as registered | 66.5% (2019) <sup>3</sup>  |
| Births attended by skilled health personnel                            | 39.7% (2018) <sup>4</sup>  |
| Women aged 15–49 who received antenatal care from a skilled provider   | 36.9% (2012) <sup>5</sup>  |
| DPT1 immunization coverage among 1-year-olds                           | 92% (2019) <sup>6</sup>    |
| Crude birth rate (per 1,000 population)                                | 21 (2015) <sup>7</sup>     |
| Total fertility rate (live births per woman)                           | 7.4 (2015) <sup>8</sup>    |
| Adolescent fertility rate (per 1,000 girls aged 15–19 years)           | 183.5 (2018) <sup>9</sup>  |
| Population under age 15 years  | 50% (2018) <sup>10</sup>   |
| Deaths   |                            |
| Completeness of death registration                                     | 3.24% (2007) <sup>11</sup> |
| Crude death rate (per 1,000 population)                                | 10.7 (2015) <sup>12</sup>  |
| Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)                          | 66 (2015) <sup>13</sup>    |
| Under 5 mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)                         | 119 (2015) <sup>14</sup>   |
| Maternal mortality ratio (per 100,000 live births)                     | 553 (2018) <sup>15</sup>   |
| Marriages and divorces   |                            |
| Marriage registration rate   | Not available              |
| Women aged 20–24 first married or in union before age 15               | Not available              |
| Women aged 20–24 first married or in union before age 18 <sup>16</sup> | 76% (2017) <sup>17</sup>   |
| Divorce registration rate  | Not available              |
| Vital statistics, including causes-of-death data                       |                            |
| Compilation and dissemination of civil registration-based statistics   | Not available              |
| Medically certified causes-of-death data                               | Not available              |

## Civil registration system

### Legislative framework

In 2019, the law that governs civil registration was upgraded. This was the third restructuring of the law since independence from France in 1960; the last time this was done was in 2007. The new civil registration bill was approved on 29 July 2019 (*Loi n° 2019-29 du 1<sup>er</sup> juillet 2019 portant sur le régime de l'Etat civil au Niger*) and decreed on 23 August that same year. The new text reflects the continental recommendations to improve the civil registration systems in each country and takes into consideration birth, marriage, divorce, and death registration.

### Management, organization, and operations

The national civil registration authority in Niger is the Directorate of Civil Status, Migration and Refugees, under the Ministry of the Interior.

These are the other ministries and agencies responsible for notifying vital events:

- Ministry of the Interior;
- Ministry of Public Health;
- Ministry of Justice;
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs; and
- Ministry of National Defense.

### National CRVS coordination mechanisms

Niger has a national CRVS coordination committee, the Observatoire National de l'État Civil (ONEC). It was created by Order No. 0309/MI/SP/D/ACR/DGECD, dated 27 April 2015.

#### ONEC national members

- Ministry of the Interior
- Ministry of Health
- National Statistical Office
- Ministry of Justice
- Ministry of Child Protection
- Ministry of Population
- Ministry of Defense
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Ministry of Finance
- Ministry of Planning
- Ministry of Education
- Ministry of Communication
- Association of Traditional Chiefs
- National Human Rights Commission
- Women's Federation
- Association of Municipalities of Niger

#### ONEC development partners

- United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
- World Health Organization (WHO)
- United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)
- United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA)

### Administrative-level registration centres

Niger has a decentralized civil registration system, with 11,638 registration offices throughout the country. Of these, 582 are in urban areas and 11,056 are in rural areas. The offices are serviced by 618 registrars. Niger also has auxiliary registration offices in some hospitals and health centres; their main responsibility is to issue notification certificates (*déclaration* in French).

Nigerians living abroad may register vital events at the country's diplomatic missions. These missions can also preside at and register marriages. Given the size of the country and the difficult infrastructure conditions, information does not flow in a timely and secure manner. Storage of vital event records is complicated by the hot, dry climate, making it a challenge to obtain copies of documents.

## Accessibility of civil registration services

Most people live less than 1 km from the nearest local civil registration office. Estimates indicate that it would take less than 1 hour for most service seekers to reach the nearest office.

## Registration of vital events

The notification and registration of vital events is done manually. Two copies are made of the notification: one copy is archived at the point of registration, and the second copy is sent to the civil registry office.

### Birth registration

For the registration of births, three copies are made:

- the first copy is archived by the civil registry;
- the second copy is sent to the Bureau of Statistics "with some frequency"; and
- the third copy is for the child (parents).

### Death registration

No information available

### Marriage registration

No information available

## Backlog of unregistered births

The backlog of unregistered births is 33 percent. Also, for vital events that are registered, some people have not picked up their certificates.

## Sample registration forms

Not available online

## Registration fee

These are the direct costs linked to the registration and certification of vital events:

| Vital event | Fee for registration |    | Cost of registration |
|-------------|----------------------|----|----------------------|
|             | Yes                  | No |                      |
| Birth       |                      | X  | No cost              |
| Marriage    |                      | X  | No cost              |
| Divorce     |                      | X  | No cost              |
| Death       |                      | X  | No cost              |

|          | Fee for certificates |    | Cost of a certificate  |
|----------|----------------------|----|------------------------|
|          | Yes                  | No |                        |
| Birth    | X                    |    | US\$0.36<br>(200 FCFA) |
| Marriage | X                    |    | US\$0.36<br>(200 FCFA) |
| Divorce  | X                    |    | US\$0.36<br>(200 FCFA) |
| Death    | X                    |    | US\$0.36<br>(200 FCFA) |

# Vital statistics system

## Vital statistics

The Niger National Institute of Statistics (INS) was created in 2004. It is regulated by *Law 2004-011 Concerning the organization of the statistics activities and creation of the National Institute of Statistics (Loi n° 2004-011 du 30 mars 2004 Portant sur l'organisation de l'activité statistique et créant l'Institut National de la Statistique)*.

The collection of vital statistics is required, but collecting, compiling, and disseminating these is complicated by the fact that registration is manual and paper based.

Also, information is not submitted on a regular basis; the last report on vital statistics was published in 2014.

## Causes of death

Cause-of-death information is collected and recorded by region for deaths occurring in health facilities only. The latest report available online is the Annual Statistical Report by the Ministry of Health (2017).<sup>18</sup>

**Table 1. Information collected on causes of death.**

| Cause-of-death information                          | Information collected |    |
|---|-----------------------|----|
|   | Yes                   | No |
| For deaths occurring in health facilities           | X                     |    |
| For natural deaths occurring in the communities     | No data available     |    |
| For non-natural deaths occurring in the communities | No data available     |    |

## Digitization

### Computerization

Since 2016, Niger has had a High Commissioner of Information and Communications Technology in charge of the country's e-government strategy. In 2017, the National Agency for the Information Society (ANSI) was established: it is responsible for managing the National Data Centre. ANSI, along with the Ministry of Digital Economy, is responsible for creating a system for establishing and managing people's electronic identity.

The registration of births, marriages, and deaths in Niger continues to be paper based, but there are plans to digitize records and use computers more widely. Factors preventing the use of computers have been a lack of stable electricity grids and limited internet coverage.

### *Online registration services at health facilities*

No information available

### *Mobile technology application*

There are no mobile applications for the notification or registration of vital events. However, with 40.5 mobile subscriptions for every 100 people in 2017, it is estimated that 80 percent of the population has access to the 2G mobile network.<sup>19</sup>

### *Unique identification number*

No information available

### *Digitization of historical civil registration records*

No information available

### *Link with identification system*

No information available

### **Interface with other sectors and operations**

No information available

## Improvement initiatives and external support

### Improvement plan and budget

#### *Budgetary allocations and requirements*

The budget needed for this plan is estimated at US\$120 million; information on the actual budget allocation is not available.



## Activities identified as high priorities

The prioritized activities in the current national plan are:

- Capacity building for civil registration;
- Computerization of the civil registration system;
- Statistical production of vital statistics; and
- Social mobilization.

## Support from development partners

The development partners that provided support for the civil registration and vital statistics systems improvement initiative in the past are listed below.

**Table 2. Organizations that provided support for Niger's CRVS system improvements.**

| Organization   | Type of support  |
|----------------|--|
| European Union | Support for targeted civil and functional registers related to international migration and security.                                 |
| UNFPA          |  |
| UNICEF         | Support for birth registration in selected parts of the country.   |
| UNHCR          | Support for registration of internally displaced persons and refugees.   |
| WHO            | Support for health information and research: quality health data, civil registration, and vital statistics                           |
| World Bank     | Niger will be included in the West Africa Unique Identification for Regional Integration and Inclusion (WURI) Program. <sup>20</sup> |

## Conclusion

Niger has made progress in civil registration over the past 15 years, especially with respect to revising and updating the legal framework. However, gaps and challenges remain, particularly when it comes to institutional and administrative capacity.

The country's high poverty rate (41.4 percent in 2019)<sup>21</sup> affects registration rates. Niger has also been coping with a high number of internally displaced persons and a significant influx of refugees from neighbouring countries because of conflicts in the region. This puts a lot of pressure on all government institutions and structures, including civil registration and keeping up with timely vital statistics. An important factor here is that Niger's civil registration law allows for births on Niger soil to be registered even if the parents are not Niger citizens.

Although Niger ranks last in the UN's Human Development Index (HDI), the report notes that inequality has fallen substantially "as the incomes of the bottom 40 percent grew 35 percentage points more than the average."

Niger is aligned with efforts in Africa to improve CRVS systems and has developed a National CRVS Strategy. It will require resources to make the plan operational and to implement it. Given the recent major investment the country has made to upgrade the legal framework for civil registration, a next step should be to analyze the institutional and administrative capacity of both the civil registration system and the vital statistics system. It will then be possible to assess their ability to implement the modernization arrangements so that Niger has the CRVS system it needs.

## Resources

### Websites

Annuaire statistique du Niger: [stat-niger.org/statistique/file/Annuaire\\_Statistiques/2013/AS\\_Chapitre/AS2010-2014\\_POPULATION.pdf](http://stat-niger.org/statistique/file/Annuaire_Statistiques/2013/AS_Chapitre/AS2010-2014_POPULATION.pdf)

Droit Afrique: [droit-afrique.com/pays/niger/#documentation](http://droit-afrique.com/pays/niger/#documentation)

Government of Niger: [gouv.ne/](http://gouv.ne/)

Humanitarian Data Exchange: [data.humdata.org/showcase?q=Niger&ext\\_search\\_source=main-nav&page=1](http://data.humdata.org/showcase?q=Niger&ext_search_source=main-nav&page=1)

Institut National de la Statistique: [stat-niger.org/](http://stat-niger.org/)

UNICEF: [data.unicef.org/crvs/niger/](http://data.unicef.org/crvs/niger/)

United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA): [unfpa.org/data/transparency-portal/unfpa-niger](http://unfpa.org/data/transparency-portal/unfpa-niger)

World Health Organization (WHO): [who.int/countries/ner/en/](http://who.int/countries/ner/en/)

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